

Kings, queens and senators, she's above them all'

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DUCHESS from 1A

Sarah then headed downtown to the Datura Street offices of the Community Foundation of Palm Beach and Martin Counties. There, she met with six people with Amyotrophic Lateral Sclerosis, also known as Lou Gehrig's disease.

The duchess, patron for the Motor Neurone Association, as the disease is known in the United Kingdom, got involved because a friend was stricken with the disease.

She noted one woman's beautifully manicured fingernails and asked whether she followed any special diet.

"Obviously you don't do floors," Sarah quipped, then with a wink, added, "I don't either," drawing big

laughs.

"I've met the king and queen of Thailand, senators, politicians and two of the Kennedys," said Dennylin Washington of Fort St. Lauderdale with her daughter, Tanya Sapp, "but she's above them all."

Before leaving, Sarah jumped from her limousine to chat with 7-year-old Whitney Semon and her father James. Sarah gave Whitney her roses.

Sarah next visited the Children's Medical Center at St. Mary's Hospital.

In one playroom, she visited with four children and helped one apply a splint to her doll. She autographed the hospital's copy of her book, *Budgie and the Blizzard*, and 6-year-old patient Stephanie Steele's copy of *The Complete Tales of Beatrix Potter*.

Sarah entered another playroom and sat with three

other children.

In less than five minutes, she was gone, headed for the hospital's new Birthplace maternity wing. She discussed birth weights and siblings with Debbie and Dan McPherson of West Palm Beach, whose daughter, Erin, was born Friday.

"She wanted to know if it (giving birth) was any easier this time than the first two times," said Debbie McPherson, 34. "I told her no. She just laughed."

After a private lunch on Palm Beach, the duchess spent the afternoon at the beach house of her hosts Robert and Lewis Fomon. A barbecue was held there Friday night with selected guests, including Canadian Prime Minister Brian Mulroney and his wife, Milla, frequent Palm Beach vacationers.

Later, she attended a private dinner-dance at the Everglades Club, which is accused by the Anti-Defamation League of excluding Jews and other minorities.

About 40 onlookers and reporters caught a glimpse of her as she entered the club.

"This is a private party that has absolutely no connection to the Everglades Club other than the hosts have rented the building," said Michael Price, press secretary for the British Embassy in Washington.

Several Jewish guests were invited, he said.

Staff writer Scott Haaften and staff photographers Caroline Goug, Scott and C.J. Walker contributed to this report.

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